

REMARKS

By the present amendment, claims 1 and 5 have been amended to recite that the base material film (1) is made of a material including a thermoplastic resin (A) having a substituted and/or non-substituted imido group in a side chain, and a thermoplastic resin (B) having a substituted and/or non-substituted phenyl group and nitrile group in a side chain.

Also, new claims 25-26 have been added. Support for the added recitations is found in the original application, for example, on page 8, lines 11-17, page 6, lines 10-17, and the Examples.

Claims 1-26 are pending in the present application. Claim 1 is the only independent claim. Claims 18-19 and 22-23 are currently withdrawn from consideration.

In the Office Action, claims 1, 3-5, and 7-17, 20-21 and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by US 5,491,001 to Mazaki et al. ("Mazaki"), and claims 2 and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Mazaki.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested. It is submitted that none of the cited references teaches or suggests a base material film made of a material including a thermoplastic resin (A) and a thermoplastic resin (B) as recited in present claims 1 and 5. In particular, Mazaki is silent regarding a combination of such thermoplastic resins for its plastic substrate film (see Mazaki at col. 26, lines 25-37).

In contrast, in the presently claimed invention, the optical film comprises an optical compensation layer (2) on one side of a base material film (1) made of the material as recited in

present claim 1. An advantage of this feature is that it is possible, using an elliptically polarizing plate comprising the optical film of the invention, to improve contrast considerably, especially in liquid crystal displays in VA mode, as disclosed in the specification and illustrated in particular in the Examples. This feature of the presently claimed invention and its advantages are not taught or suggested in any of the cited references. Therefore, the present claims are not anticipated by Mazaki, and not obvious over the cited references taken alone or in any combination.

In addition, with respect to the dependent claims, it is submitted that the combined features of these respective claims are not taught or suggested in any of the cited references. In particular, with respect to claims 25-26, the cited references fail to teach or suggest the improvements to liquid crystal displays in VA mode by using an optical film of present claim 9. Therefore, the respective dependent claims, and in particular claims 25-26, are not anticipated by Mazaki, and not obvious over the cited references taken alone or in any combination.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the rejections should be withdrawn.

In conclusion, the invention as presently claimed is patentable. It is believed that the claims are in allowable condition and a notice to that effect is earnestly requested.

In the event there is, in the Examiner's opinion, any outstanding issue and such issue may be resolved by means of a telephone interview, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Amendment
Serial No. 10/760,546
Attorney Docket No. 042043

In the event this paper is not considered to be timely filed, the Applicants hereby petition for an appropriate extension of the response period. Please charge the fee for such extension and any other fees which may be required to our Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,

WESTERMAN, HATTORI, DANIELS & ADRIAN, LLP



Nicolas E. Seckel
Attorney for Applicants
Reg. No. 44,373

Atty. Docket No. 042043
Customer No.: 38834
1250 Connecticut Avenue NW Suite 700
Washington, D.C. 20036
Tel: (202) 822-1100
Fax: (202) 822-1111
NES:rep